

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**4<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

### **Australian-first technology in Toowoomba continues to make a difference this World Cancer Day**

***Local cancer centre treats their 200<sup>th</sup> patient on world-leading radiation therapy machine***

A Dalby patient has become the 200<sup>th</sup> person to receive treatment on Australasia's first Varian Halcyon system at the Radiation Oncology Centre (ROC) in Toowoomba.

The Halcyon system is the latest in radiation therapy technology and was installed at ROC in October 2017. On World Cancer Day, the machine has treated over 200 patients, and delivered more than 5,800 treatments. The machine has the capacity to treat up to 50 patients a day and its pioneering technology simplifies every aspect of treatment, to deliver pinpoint precision and speed, alongside providing greater comfort to patients.

More than 26,000 Queenslanders are diagnosed with cancer every year, and more than 8,600 die from the disease, with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reporting cancer affected 542 per 100,000 people in Queensland between 2006 and 2010<sup>1</sup>. The need for access to cancer treatment has never been more important.

Dalby resident and cancer patient, Rodney Pharaoh was diagnosed with prostate cancer in August of last year after he asked his GP for blood tests because his father had prostate cancer.

"I was lucky. They caught it quite early, so I wasn't overly worried. But still, you never think it's going to happen to you but when it does you need to accept it and do what you can," Mr Pharaoh said.

Rodney received hormone treatment to shrink the tumour following by four weeks of radiation therapy treatment on the Halcyon.

"I was surprised by how quick the treatment is. I'm on the machine for about 3 to 4 minutes. It's been good so far, I haven't had any major side effects and it's been easy to drive to and from my appointments."

For Rodney, and many like him ROC in Toowoomba allows cancer patients to stay close to their homes and their families.

"Having this machine and this centre in Toowoomba is fantastic. This kind of technology is usually in the cities, so having it in Toowoomba for people in this region to access is just amazing. Many people would have previously had to travel all the way to Brisbane. People can't do that drive every day, it's tiring, and many wouldn't be able to even afford to do that and be away from family."

ROC Toowoomba is part of Icon Group, Australia's largest dedicated provider of cancer care and has been delivering care to the local community for 11 years. Icon Group CEO, Mark Middleton, said the company remains focused on bringing cancer care to where people live, especially those in regional areas.

"World Cancer Day is a time to stand together and make a real difference. This centre is extremely important to Icon's history, as it was the first radiation therapy centre I helped establish, with the intention it would provide the community with access to the best possible care, without the need to travel. It is a proud moment for myself and everyone at Icon that we have been able to bring this absolutely world-class

technology that is making a difference to local cancer patients in Toowoomba and the wider region," Mr Middleton said.

Icon Group has experienced rapid growth in the past eighteen months, with 28 cancer centres now established across Australia bringing comprehensive, state-of-the-art cancer care services to previously underserved locations, including outer-metropolitan and regional areas.

**ENDS**

**About Icon Group:**

Radiation Oncology Centres is part of Icon Group - Australia's largest dedicated cancer care provider. The Group has expanded globally into Singapore, China and New Zealand and is among the top ten healthcare companies in Australia.

The Group's cancer services include 28 cancer centres in Australia, including day oncology hospitals, radiation oncology facilities and comprehensive centres that bring both oncology disciplines together.

The Group also encompasses Epic Pharmacy: provider of medication management and pharmacy services to the hospital, oncology and aged care sectors; and Slade Health: one of Australia's largest chemotherapy compounders with three TGA-approved manufacturing sites across the eastern seaboard. For more information visit [www.icongroup.global](http://www.icongroup.global) and follow us on social media @IconGroupAU

**Issued on behalf of Icon Group by WE Buchan. Media inquiries to:**

**Liz Hebditch**

Ph: (02) 9237 2828

[lhebditch@we-buchan.com](mailto:lhebditch@we-buchan.com)

**Ashleigh Bonetti**

Ph: (02) 9237 2811

[abonetti@we-buchan.com](mailto:abonetti@we-buchan.com)

References:

1. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Cancer Incidence and Mortality Across Regions (CIMAR) books. <http://www.aihw.gov.au/cancer-data/cimar-books/>